



United States Department of Agriculture

## Missouri Farm Service Agency (FSA)

### Counties Eligible to Help in Drought Relief

July 19, 2006 — Thirty-six southwestern Missouri counties are included in an expansion of Conservation Reserve Program acreage eligible for emergency haying and grazing for livestock producers in states affected by drought, according to the head of the Missouri state Farm Service Agency.

Tim Kelley, FSA state executive director, said to be approved for emergency haying or grazing, a county must be listed as a level "D3 Drought – Extreme" or greater, or have suffered at least a 40 percent loss of normal moisture and forage for the preceding four-month qualifying period. Producers with CRP acreage in these listed counties can apply for the emergency program.

No Missouri counties currently meet the drought requirements, Kelley said. However, under the expansion of the acreage open to emergency relief, producers in designated drought counties may arrange with producers in counties within the expanded area, such as those in Missouri, to hay or graze their CRP acreage.

"CRP participants in the 36 Missouri counties can offer their acreage — free or for a fee — to producers in designated counties in 10 states, including Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska and Texas, but they may not hay or graze those acres for their own use," said Kelley.

The affected Missouri counties are Barry, Barton, Bates, Benton, Camden, Cass, Cedar, Christian, Dade, Dallas, Douglas, Greene, Henry, Hickory, Howell, Jackson, Jasper, Johnson, Jasper, Johnson, Lafayette, Laclede, Lawrence, McDonald, Miller, Morgan, Newton, Ozark, Pettis, Polk, Pulaski, St. Clair, Stone, Taney, Texas, Vernon, Webster and Wright.

The Conservation Reserve Program is voluntary and offers annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term resource-conserving cover on eligible land. "Producers who elect to hay or graze their CRP acres, or allow others to do so because of the emergency, should understand that their annual rental payments will be reduced by 10 percent," said Kelley.

Producers participating in managed haying and grazing activities on their CRP acreage are subject to a 25 percent reduction in their annual rental payments.

Producers in the affected counties are encouraged to contact their local Farm Service Agency office for details on how to apply for emergency haying and grazing.